

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

August 4, 2004

Governor George E. Pataki  
State Capitol  
Albany, NY 12224

Dear Governor Pataki:

I am writing today to respectfully urge you to request that the United States Department of Agriculture declare a disaster in the areas of New York where crops have been damaged by the recent wet and cool conditions.

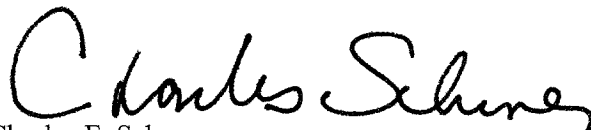
Throughout the state there have been reports of damage to crops from the recent wet and cool weather. For example, wheat crops have been damaged by heavy rains that caused them to sprout early, making the wheat unusable for flour. Many wheat growers will instead be forced to sell their crop for animal feed at a loss of 50% or more in value. Similarly, many areas have experienced losses of quality and quantity of dry hay and straw as the wet weather has prevented harvest. Many other crops have shown signs of stress or stunted growth and may eventually also require disaster assistance.

Damage to wheat, hay and other crops has been reported across the state including the Capitol Region (Schoharie), Central New York (Cortland, Madison, Oneida, Onondaga, Oswego), the Finger Lakes Region (Livingston, Monroe, Ontario, Seneca, Wayne, Yates), the North Country (Herkimer, Jefferson, Lewis, St. Lawrence), and Western New York (Cattaraugus, Chautauqua, Erie, Genesee, Niagara, Orleans, Wyoming). While more crops and counties may be affected as the season progresses, I urge you not to delay in requesting disaster assistance from the USDA for these and any other counties that have experienced significant crop damage already.

There are some things that farmers can account for when they're doing business, like market conditions and costs they incur, but severe weather just isn't one of them. I hope you will seek federal relief to help keep these farmers in business. USDA Emergency Loans funds could be used to help eligible farmers and producers recover from the production losses from the recent adverse weather.

I look forward to working with you to ensure that USDA will provide these areas with much needed emergency aid, and I offer you my personal pledge to do everything possible to secure this aid.

Sincerely,



Charles E. Schumer  
United States Senator